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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 002598

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [SOCI](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)  
SUBJECT: SOMALIA - TFG PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER FAIL TO  
COMPROMISE; IGAD TO CONVENE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING NOVEMBER  
17

REF: ADDIS ABABA 3109

Classified By: Somalia Unit Counselor Bob Patterson. Reasons: 1.4 (b,  
d).

11. (C) Summary: As forecast reftel, the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) President and Prime Minister failed November 15 - 16, without really trying, to compromise in their continuing disagreement about the composition of the TFG cabinet. Each publicly blamed the other for the failure. The President was departing Nairobi late afternoon November 16, reportedly for Libya. The Prime Minister remained in Nairobi and was expected to huddle on the evening of November 16 with those members of the cabinet he has unilaterally appointed. The Prime Minister told the Embassy November 15 that he planned to pursue an IGAD/Djibouti Process-charted roadmap without the President, whom he described at a November 16 press conference as opposed to the TFG. The Prime Minister turned aside efforts to arrange a meeting with President Yusuf on the evening of November 15. Both the Yusuf and Prime Minister "Nur Adde" are lobbying the approximately 180 members of parliament who remain in Nairobi; Yusuf reportedly in an effort to prevent a quorum from assembling in Baidoa to approve Nur Adde's cabinet. Embassy Addis Ababa has confirmed that a snap IGAD meeting on Somalia, possibly at the ministerial level, will be convened November 17. Somali contacts in Nairobi, expect a dramatic gesture from the GOE at that event. End summary.

Yusuf Unwilling  
to Budge on Cabinet  
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12. (C) As forecast reftel, TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf and Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein "Nur Adde" reached no agreement on the composition of an interim cabinet while together in Nairobi November 15 - 16. In a meeting November 15, Yusuf told us that Nur Adde "doesn't know how to compromise," and maintained that he would not accept a cabinet that included the five members (among them Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Abdisalam Aden) who had refused to do his bidding and resign the first time around. Yusuf fatalistically forecast that the TFG would collapse unless Nur Adde compromised. Then, he said, Ethiopian forces would withdraw and there would be even greater chaos. In preparation for that inevitability, Yusuf urged that Amisom be rapidly expanded and that a decision to quickly deploy a UN force be taken. (Later in the conversation, Yusuf admitted that he did not know if the GOE would follow through on its threat to withdraw troops by the end of the year.) Yusuf seemed unfazed by al-Shabaab's recent gains, telling us that "they can't take Mogadishu as long as the Ethiopians are there," and telling SRSG Ould-Abdallah in a separate meeting that he would "move to Puntland with his men if Mogadishu

fell to al-Shabaab." Appeals by the Embassy to Yusuf's "legacy" in Somalia and the importance of supporting the Djibouti process got Yusuf to say only that he would be willing to compromise with Nur Adde, if Nur Adde agreed to replace the five offending ministers with five "technical" specialists.

Nur Adde Newly  
Confident  
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¶3. (C) In separate November 15 meetings with both the Embassy and the SRSG, Nur Adde appeared very confident. He emphatically dismissed the possibility of compromise with Yusuf, who "would not accept a cabinet from me no matter who was in it." His months-long effort to work with Yusuf had been, Nur Adde said, a "waste of time." Nur Adde told us he would chart his own IGAD/Djibouti Process-influenced roadmap, to include: unilaterally appointing a cabinet, composing a Benadir administration, completing the constitution, ensuring that the high-level and security committees were fully staffed and able to accomplish their tasks, and negotiating with the ARS a government of national unity, to include an enlarged parliament.

¶4. (C) Nur Adde expected that Yusuf would actively attempt to disrupt the Djibouti process, but he seemed determined to work around the President, and he requested the international community's support for his efforts. Yusuf lost no time in attempting to undermine the Prime Minister. He hosted a lunch on November 15 for the approximately 180 parliamentarians remaining in Nairobi. Those present told us

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that Yusuf lambasted Nur Adde, who had been a "failure" as Prime Minister. "Before (Nur Adde became Prime Minister) you were getting paid, and you weren't stranded in Nairobi," Yusuf helpfully pointed out. The Prime Minister, nevertheless, appears confident that the Speaker and a significant number of parliamentarians will back him in his confrontation with President Yusuf.

President - PM: No  
Meeting in Nairobi  
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¶5. (C) Nur Adde's new-found confidence prompted him to refuse to attend a one-on-one meeting with Yusuf that had been scheduled for evening, November 15. An aide to the Prime Minister told us he had been offended by Yusuf's November 15 public dismissal of the TFG. (Yusuf told parliamentarians and the media that the TFG controls only Mogadishu and Baidoa. And al-Shabaab, he said, is eleven kilometers from Mogadishu and only five kilometers from Baidoa.) The Prime Minister countered with a press conference of his own on November 16, where he unilaterally unveiled his 10 minister, 14 deputy minister cabinet and called on IGAD and the rest of the international community to support him. Members of the Prime Minister's staff tell us that he is currently meeting with those of the nominated ministers who are with him in Nairobi in an effort to chart his next steps.

November 17 IGAD Meeting  
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¶6. (C) The President and Prime Minister's continued failure to compromise has evidently prompted the GOE as Chair to convene an impromptu IGAD ministerial, scheduled for November 17 in Addis Ababa, where observers here are expecting decisive action. In the meantime Yusuf, after announcing that he would return to Mogadishu, is reportedly traveling to Libya, where some suggest he may seek financing for possible efforts to undermine the newly-allied TFG and Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS).

¶7. (C) SRSG Ould-Abdallah plans to issue a statement calling

on Somalis to continue to support the Djibouti Process. The SRSG has asked that the ARS issue a similar statement of support. ARS contacts have told us that they are wary of issuing a statement, which could be used by the wily Yusuf to portray the ARS as in league with co-Hawiye clan member Nur Adde against the President's Darod clan. ARS contacts report that Yusuf is already pressuring Darod members of Nur Adde's unilateral cabinet to withdraw.

Comment

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18. (C) With the President and Prime Minister unable to compromise, the ball seems to be in the Government of Ethiopia's court. Some here suggest that Nur Adde's new-found confidence may be traced to support that has been promised him by an Ethiopian leadership terminally frustrated with Yusuf. Still, should Yusuf be forced out or leave the presidency himself, his name would have to be added to the list of "spoilers," along with al-Shabaab, selected warlords, and parts of the Islamic Courts Union who have been so actively impeding the work of the TFG. Nur Adde nevertheless seems to have decided that Yusuf had become as much of an impediment to the TFG within the government as he would be without, and is possibly banking on Ethiopian help to move Yusuf to the sidelines.

RANNEBERGER